

Project selection for the Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) begins with MCDOT's annual review of transportation needs. This is done by actively monitoring current traffic volumes and using a computer model for determining future traffic volumes. MCDOT also identifies and maps accident locations and rates, monitors pavement conditions, evaluates environmental concerns, and identifies maintenance problems on all County roadways. Projects identified through this process are reviewed along with requests from other agencies and citizens. Requests for projects are also coordinated with ongoing planning efforts of the cities and towns as well as state and federal agencies.

Annually, MCDOT staff reviews each project request. The projects are ranked using an objective system approved by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). The County also considers projects with already completed Candidate Assessment Reports (CAR), Design Concept Reports (DCR), and fully designed projects submitted by cities, towns, or other agencies. A CAR is a conceptual engineering study that identifies the best possible alternatives to the problem and provides an estimated cost and schedule for project completion. A DCR is a preliminary engineering study which provides more detail than a CAR concerning the best project alternative, proposed costs, and schedule.

Any city, town, or other government agency may participate in the project selection process by requesting a new project or submitting a CAR, a DCR, or fully designed project. These completed studies are also ranked and considered for the TIP. Staff then matches available County funding with all ranked and recommended projects.

## Internal Review Committees

The ranked project requests, CARs and DCRs are presented to the MCDOT's TIP Review Committee (TRC) for their consideration. This Committee consists of staff from each MCDOT division. The TRC recommends projects qualified to be advanced to the next level of development. The Committee's recommendations are forwarded to the Project Review Committee (PRC) which consists of the heads of each of the MCDOT divisions; Engineering, Planning, Right-of-way, Construction and Operations, and Professional Services.

Staff usually recommends the highest ranked projects to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) for further study or funding in the TIP. Staff will make exceptions to projects that rank high when there are circumstances that might delay the project such as environmental consideration or concerns from other agencies. The TAB holds public meetings at which each recommended project is discussed and the public has a chance to comment on the recommendations.



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## Determining Priorities

The County uses a weighted 1 to 105 scoring system for comparing project requests, CARs, DCRs, and designed projects. MCDOT created the project ranking system to comply with the mission, vision, and objectives of the County. The system was also designed to carry out the adopted Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation System Plan requirements. In addition, staff may also consider public comments, planning goals, unique opportunities, and other non-numeric factors.

Specific criteria used in ranking TIP projects in order of importance:

25 points:	Safety: Accident rate, accident severity cost, roadway configuration and pavement condition
20 points:	Current and future traffic congestion
20 points:	Benefit/cost ratio (must be a positive value to receive points)
15 points:	Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan, percent of regional travel on the roadway and environmental factors
20 points:	Joint sponsorship includes a financial commitment to the project by another local governmental agency
5 points:	Bonus points for including intelligent transportation system, pedestrian, bikeway, transit, and environmental components to the project

Factors that might cause a project to be rescheduled or deleted from the TIP:

- Significantly altered transportation needs
- Project costs exceed the benefits to the traveling public.
- Emergencies or other developments which might alter traffic patterns
- Right-of-way considerations
- Issues surrounding agreements between principal jurisdictions
- Environmental or archaeological factors that influence the final design
- Changing land use patterns

Projects may be accelerated as favorable conditions arise such as:

- Additional or new funding received; increased revenue, grants, or partnerships.
- Significantly altered transportation needs
- Emergencies
- Cooperation with other jurisdictions
- Changing land use patterns
- Recreational use

**Figure 1. TIP Project Scoring System**



## Commitment to Programmed Projects

The TIP is based on a commitment to complete projects in two phases, development and construction. Each year, projects with completed DCRs may be added to either phase of the new TIP subject to BOS approval. Projects already in the program are reviewed each year to see if they are qualified to progress to the next TIP phase. MCDOT is committed to expediting projects through the entire process. A project may be either moved ahead, delayed, or occasionally deleted from the TIP as dictated by MCDOT's analysis, objectives, and/or budget constraints.

## TIP Project Selection Process

New TIP projects are selected using the process shown in Figure 2. This process saves time for jurisdictions that submit completed CARs, DCRs, or fully designed projects. Throughout the year, MCDOT ranks initial project requests for consideration to conduct CARs. Staff then includes all completed CARs, DCRs, or designed projects in a project pool. If a project doesn't progress to the next phase after three years, the project must be updated and resubmitted by the applicant.

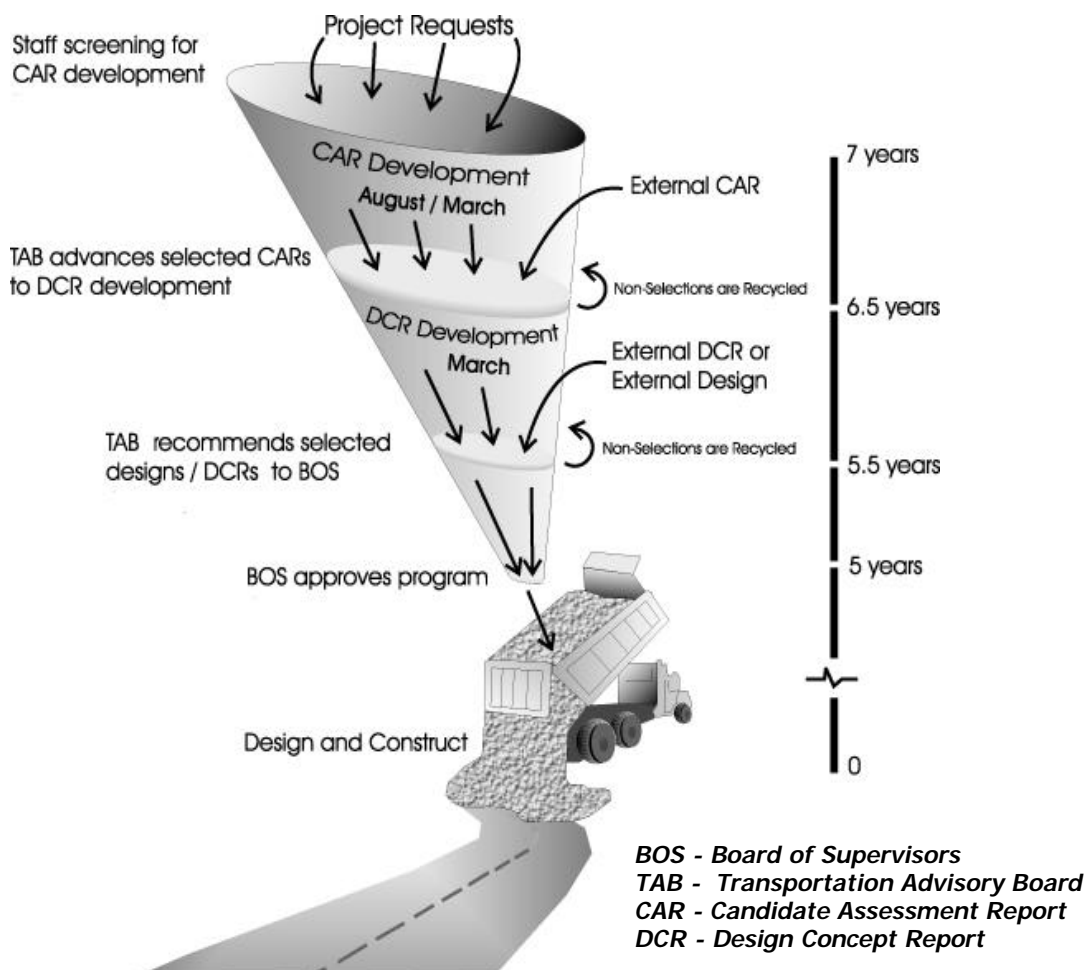


Figure 2. TIP Selection Process

